

CHAPTER VIII

COMMUNITY SERVICE AND RECREATION

Among the many aspects of frontier life there were those which served to take the hard edge from pioneering. Early doctors and midwives brought comfort to the sick. Music and drama were uplifting factors; and dancing, games, and festive occasions brought recreation to those whose life otherwise was a steady program of work in the homes and fields.

DOCTORS AND MIDWIVES

All early accounts of life in Provo Valley which mention Robert McKnight pay grateful respect to this kindly Scotch herb doctor. Uncle Robert, as he was known, the son of Michael and Lizzie McKnight, was born in Glasgow, Scotland, January 1, 1803. As a youth he was converted to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints by the first missionaries to Scotland.¹ His father turned him out of his home because of his new faith, but he was befriended by a Scotch botanist, in whose home he learned much concerning plants and medicinal herbs. He married and came to America in the general immigration of Mormon converts. His arrival in Heber in 1864 was a very welcome one, and he served as the only doctor there for many years. He displayed an untiring devotion to the people of the valley, often walking many miles under adverse conditions to be of service to the sick.

The pioneer midwives also rendered medical service of many types in addition to delivering children. Women such as Ann Giles, Ellen Clegg, Esther Wagstaff, Hannah

¹Emma Wherritt, "Doctors of Wasatch County," MSS, (Daughters of Utah Pioneers Historical Collection, Heber City, 1952), p. 1.



Robert
McKnight
Herb Doctor



Ellen
Clegg



Esther
Wagstaff



Hanah
Nicols



Cordelia
Wilson



Christina
Lindsay



Margaret
Watkins



Polly Derby
Mecham



Julia Ann
Cook



Rosella
Ann Mecham